

2013 Needs Assessment for Jefferson County

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Jamie Ferman	Karen Kapp	Diane Pickren	Carol Williams
Sherri Foster	Natalie Kianoff	Julie Preskitt	Sonya Williams
Erica Frey-Delaportas	Jennifer Kilburn	Lonnie Presley	Liz Wilson
Jane Fuller	Robin King	Marilyn Prier	Vivian Winters
Deborah Gaddis	Marie King	Steve Rapp	Dale Wisely
Patrick Galloway	Tiffany Large	Cynthia Raulston	Mary Woolridge
Jill Ganus	Lavaite Law	Amanda Rice	Russell Worrell
Pat Garlikov	Robbyn Lawson	Tameka Richardson	Joan Wright
Kelli Gerchow	Anjanette Macon	Krystal Riggins	Valerie Wyatt
Hazel Bass Germany	Rotasha Madden	Helen Rivas	
Wes Goodenough	Robert Matthews	Kiranda Robbins	

Accomplishments

Held public meetings each of 11 months. Topics included:

"Working for Children: the CPC Work Groups" Panel Discussion

"Fighting for Air for Children" - American Lung Association

"A Conversation with Dr. Susan McKim" - Dept of Children's Affairs, Alabama CPC

"Self-Injury and Cutting Among Adolescents" - Dr. Dale Wisely

"Douglas: Improving Outcomes for babies and their Families" - BirthWell Partners

"Internet Crimes Against Children: Recognition, Prevention and Response" - Jefferson County Sheriff's Office

"Summer Learning and Summer Learning Loss" - Panel Discussion

"Results of the CPC Needs Assessment Survey: What we know about the needs of our county's children" - Dr. Julie Preskitt

"Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: A Panel Discussion"

"Birmingham's GED Network" - Alabama Public TV, Lawson State & Jefferson State Community Colleges

"Managing Holiday Stress" - Dr. Dale Wisely

Engaged volunteers in work groups targeting children's safety, early care and education, health, and economic security needs. Work groups meet monthly to examine children's issues and develop projects to increase awareness of those issues.

Provided communication and logistical support for the Central Alabama Mentoring Coalition which sponsored The Mentor Institute, a full day conference designed to increase use of best practices in mentoring programs.

Collaborated with school leaders and communities in two school districts and with policy partners, the Jefferson County Department of Health and United Way's Healthy Kids Healthy Communities initiative to develop comprehensive school health policies through partnerships.

Co-sponsored the After School Wellness Summit for school personnel from all 12 school districts.

With School Wellness partners, developed the After School Toolkit, a guide for healthy snacks and physical activity.

Organized multi-school Lights On After School event.

Was awarded a grant through UAB's Center for the Study of Community Health to partner with the School of Public Health to expand strategies for identifying children's needs using community-based participatory research methods.

Engaged a master's level intern to assist with community-based research.

Was awarded a grant from the Public Health Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham to develop shared space policies for three area schools to increase school-community collaboration for increased physical activity.

Sponsored a full day seminar about shared space agreements and their importance in increasing health throughout communities. Presenters included the health policy representative from the American Heart Association and the school wellness coordinator from Jackson, Mississippi.

Co-sponsored the Birmingham Regional Training Conference for the state CPC. Training centered on bullying and cyber-bullying.

Co-sponsored, with The Alabama Poverty Project, a community forum on bullying offered through The David Matthews Center for Civic Life.

The Early Care and Education Work Group provided two sessions for pre-K and day care professionals about safety and crisis planning. Sessions were lead by representatives from The Alabama Association of School Resource Officers, and Jefferson County's Health Department and Emergency Management Agency.

Continued active participation in the Jefferson County Coordinated Community Response to Family Violence and UAB's Jefferson County Community Participation Board.

Maintained active social media messaging for the child-serving community through email, Facebook and Twitter.

Provided organizational and logistical support for the Economic Security Work Group's implementation

of the Birmingham GED Network. Through the Network the CPC provided information to the education community about major changes to GED testing requirements.

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First Priority

Need related to children of this county

Children are healthy.

Responses to the community survey conducted by UAB's School of Public Health and the CPC of Jefferson County during the spring of 2013 indicates the following are problems for the county's children: smoking/using tobacco, using alcohol, using drugs (marijuana/pot, meth, cocaine, crack, pills), unsafe driving habits (speeding, texting/cell phone use, not wearing seat belt), obesity, not enough opportunities for physical activity, having sex too young and not practicing safe sex if sexually active.

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
AllKids Health Insurance Pediatricians Children's of Alabama, other area hospitals Jefferson County Department of Health for both obesity prevention and prevention of tobacco use. Drug treatment, counseling centers: Eastern and Western Mental Health, private treatment centers, Jefferson Blount St. Clair Mental Health Authority, Hillcrest Hospital, school counselors Driver's education in most schools, public safety/awareness campaigns Parks, playgrounds, school PE activities, local, civic and church PE centers, walking trails, Safe Routes to School programs, Walking School Bus programs Community planning for health foods and physical activity through Jefferson County's Health Action Plan	More public access to safe places to play, engage in physical activity Better programming, public awareness of the negative outcomes of early/unsafe sexual activity (sex ed classes) Greater access to healthy Increased incentives for schools to link with community services (physical activity, health programming, prevention resources) at school sites.

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

CPC's Shared Space Initiative to demonstrate community benefits of school-based health activities
Policy statements from state agencies indicating support for healthy initiatives, i.e. community mental health/drug treatment centers, Department of Education support for the communities and schools concept, sex education, etc. Funding through those agencies would speed steps toward improvement; however, written policy support for innovative local initiatives encourages replication.
Awareness programming through CPC meetings, CPC work group meetings, collaborative efforts toward raising awareness.

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Second Priority

Need related to children of this county

Children transition successfully to adulthood

Responses to the community survey conducted by UAB's School of Public Health and the CPC of Jefferson County during the spring of 2013 indicates the following are problems for the county's children: Not enough jobs, not enough affordable housing, hard to find and use college prep courses, hard to find and use college alternative programs (Vocational school, technical programs, job training), inadequate financial or budgeting skills.

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Community colleges for GED preparation and testing, other providers of GED preparation Financial literacy assistance program through United Way of Central Alabama Junior Achievement Internship/mentoring program Jefferson County Housing Authority Birmingham Housing Authority One Roof	Raise awareness of existing GED preparation opportunities; Scholarships for fees associated with GED prep/testing; Increased access to vocational education opportunities for high school and junior high school students; Mandatory financial literacy courses for high school students; Active, aggressive recruitment to credit recovery programs allowing students to graduate from high school; Social workers in schools to provide case management for students at risk of dropping out of high school.

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

Increase awareness of available resources for job coaching, access to financial literacy training;
Increased outreach to at-risk students;
School/business partnerships offering work-study, internships, mentoring.

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Third Priority

Need related to children of this county

Families are strong and stable.

Responses to the community survey conducted by UAB's School of Public Health and the CPC of Jefferson County during the spring of 2013 indicates the following are problems for the county's children: Parents don't get involved often enough with their children's school activities (homework, clubs, events; parents don't read to their children often enough; parents smoking/using tobacco, parents using drugs, hard to find and use child safety information (shaken baby, car seat, bike helmets), divorce or relationship break-up and its effects on children/families.

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
<p>Tobacco use prevention: Jefferson County Department of Health; American Heart Association; American Lung Association; Center for Disease Control.</p> <p>Drug abuse prevention and treatment: private drug treatment centers; UAB Substance Abuse prevention and treatment programs, Alethia House, Olivia's House, Oakmont Center, other hospital-based treatment centers, Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon.</p> <p>School-based drug prevention programs; faith-based intervention and treatment programs; Narcotics Anonymous, Hillcrest Hospital.</p> <p>For parenting: Parent Hotline; Family Guidance Centers.</p> <p>School counselors; faith counselors; divorce support groups; family counseling centers.</p> <p>Resources that focus on reading to children include Reach Out and Read Alabama, Alabama School Readiness Alliance; Success by 6, public libraries.</p>	<p>Access to mental health resources for children remains urgent need for Jefferson County's children. Children of drug and alcohol addicted parents face anxiety and depression which often goes undiagnosed, especially among the very young. If mental health treatment is needed, there are too few therapists to meet children's needs. School counselors are often diverted from counseling duties by other school duties; too few social workers are available to students to assist with case management and access to resources; state funding for children's mental health services is very low. School based mental health counseling would help meet the need of children facing grief issues, which includes managing reactions to divorce.</p>

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

Many free parenting classes are offered throughout the community.

Awareness campaigns are needed to help parents understand the value of reading aloud to children.

Increased awareness through programming about children's mental health needs.